

T W E L V E
Considerable Serious Que-
stions touching CHVRCH
GOVERNMENT.

Sadly propounded (out of a Reall Desire
of Vnitie, and Tranquillity in Church
and State) to all Sober-minded Christians, Cordially
affecting a speedy settled Reformation, and Brother-
ly Christian Vnion in all our Churches and Do-
minions, now miserably wasted with Civill
Unnaturall Warres, and deplorably lacerated
with Ecclesiasticall Dissentions.

By William Pryme, of Lincolnes Inne, Esquire.

1 Cor. 1. 10.

*Now I beseech you Brethren by the Name of Our Lord Iesus Christ, that yee all
speake the same thing, and that there be no diuisions among you: but that ye be
perfectly joynd together in the same minde, and in the same judgement.*

1 Cor. 3. 3, 4.

*For yee are yet carnall: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and di-
visions, are ye not carnall, and walke as men?*

For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollo, are ye not carnall?

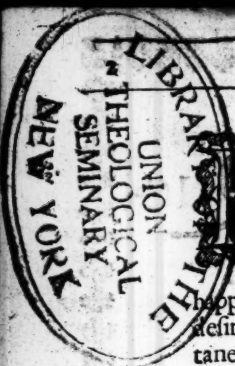
1 Cor. 14. 33.

God is not the Author of unquietnesse, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.

L O N D O N,

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the Blew Bible in Green Arbour, 1644.

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Having neither *Leisure* nor *Opportunity* to debate the late unhappy differences sprung up amongst us touching Church Government (disputed at large by Master Herle, Doctor Steward, Master Rotherford, Master Edwards, Master Durey, Master Goodwin, Master Nye, Master Symphon, and others,) which much retard the speedy accomplishment, and establishment of that happy Reformation, wee all earnestly pray for, and at least pretend Cordially to desire, I have (at the importunity of some Reverend Friends,) digested my subitane apprehensions of these distracting Controversies, into the ensuing considerable Questions, which sadly pondered, & solidly debated by sober-minded peaceably disposed men of greater Ability and Vacancy for such a worke, then I enjoy, may put a happy period to all our dissensions about this Subject, and heartily unite our devided Judgements, Affections, the better to secure our selves against the common Enemies, who prevaile most by our divisions.

1. Whether the Gospel being by Christs owne Injunction, to be (2) preached to all Nations and people whatsoever, (who have their severall established different formes of Civill Government, Lawes, Manners, Rules, and Customes, suitable to their respective dispositions, climes, republikes,) it can be infallibly evidenced by any Gospel Text, That Christ hath peremptorily prescribed one and the selfe same forme of Ecclesiasticall Government, discipline, Rites to all Nations, Churches in all particulars from which they may in no case vary, under paine of mortall sin, Scisme, or being no true Churches of Christ, with whom good Christians may not safely communicate? Or (rather) whether every severall Nation, republike, and Nationall Church hath not under the Gospel (6) a Libertie, and latitude left them to chuse and settle such an orderly form of Church-Government, discipline, and Ecclesiasticall Rites, as is most suitable to their particular Civill Government, Lawes, Manners, Customes: alwaies provided it be consonant and no waies repugnant to the Word of God, nor prejudiciall to his sincere worship, or the peoples salvation, nor such as hinders their Christian Communion, unity, Charity among themselves & with other true Christian Churches? This being (as I conceive) a generally received truth among all (c) Protestant Churches; the very substance of the 34. Article of the Church of England; of the 77. Article of the Church of Ireland, and of the Statutes of 2. & 3. E. 6. c. 13. & 4. E. 6. c. 10. 5. & 6. E. 6. c. 1. 1. Eliz. c. 2. 8. Eliz. c. 1. And whether some things in all Church Governements, Disciplines, Ceremonies whatsoever, are not and must not be left to humane prudence, for which there is no direct precept nor pattern in sacred Writ, which hath been asserted to by all parties, Churches whatsoever, in theory or practise.

2. Whether, if any Kingdome or Nation shall by a Nationall Councell, Synod and Parliament, upon serious debate, Elect such a publike Church-Government, Rites, discipline as they conceive to be most Consonant to Gods Word, to the Lawes, Government under which they live, and manners of their people, and then settle them by a generall law; all particular Churches Members of that Kingdome and Nation, be not thereby actually obliged in point of (a) Conscience & Christianity, readily to submit thereto, and no wayes to seeke an exemption from it, under paine of being guiltie of Arrogancie Scisme, Contumacie, and lyable to such penalties as are due to these offences?

3. Whether that forme of Ecclesiasticall Government, which hath sufficient (if not best) warrant for it in the New Testament: the examples of the Primitive Church, of the best reformed Churches in this latter age to backe it; the resolutions of the most eminent persons for Learning and Pietie in all Protestant Churches, approving it, tends most to effect, *establish Christian (e) Unitie, Peace and Unity, in the Churches, Nations, Kingdomes embracing it*, and with forraign Churches professing the same Religion, suites best with the publike civil Government, Lawes, Manners of those Realmes who receive it, and serves most effectually to prevent, suppress all Heresies, Errors, Scismes, Factions, diversities of opinions, corruptions of manners Libertinisme, Injustice, with other inconveniencies which may infest a Church or State; is not to be chosen, received as the undoubted Church-Government, agreeable to the Gospell of *Christ*, and to be preferred before that Ecclesiasticall Government, which hath no such expresse warrant for it in Scripture, no patterne for it in the Primitive, or best reformed Churches, no generall approbation of the most eminent persons for Learning and Piety in all Protestant Churches, asserting it; tendes not to effect maintenance or establish Christian Unitie, Peace, Amity in the Churches, Nations, Kingdomes embracing it: suites not with their established civill Lawes, Government and is no effectuall meanes to prevent or suppress, but rather to introduce and foment all Heresies, Errors, Scismes, Factions, diversities of opinions, corruptions of manners, Libertinisme, Injustice (for want of Appeales) and other inconveniencies, which may infest a Church or State?

4. Whether the *Presbyteriall* forme of Church-government, if rightly ordered, be not such as is expressed in the former: the Independent such as is mentioned in the latter part of the preceding question? and therefore the first of them rather to be embraced then the last, without any long debate?

5. Whether the grounds and reasons principally insisted on for an Independent Church Government, be not such as if duly examined, will by unevitable necessary consequences subvert, dissolve, at least imbroyle, endanger all Nationall, Provinciall Churches, Councils, Synods, all settled Monarchicall, Aristocraticall, or Oligarchicall formes of civill Government in Nations, Republickes, States, Cities; reduce all Ecclesiasticall, all Civill publike kindes of Government, to that which is merely Parochiall or Domestickall, and make every small Congregation, Family, (yea person if possible) an Independent Church and Republike, exempt from all other publike Lawes, or Rules of civill and Ecclesiasticall Government, butt what they shall freely elect; prescribe unto themselves, during pleasure and alter as they see occasion, upon more light of truth revealed?

6. Whether in all Nations Ages, from the first preaching of the Gospell till this present as Christians and beleivers multiplied, particular Churches, did not likewise multiply, which had a dependency on, and communion one with another, and were all subordinate to Nationall or Provinciall Synods, and publike Ecclesiasticall constitutions? And whether any one example of such a particular Independent Congregational Church or Government, as some now strenuously contend for, (or any one eminent Writer who maintained the same) can be produced, in any Christian Nation, Kingdome or Republike, totally converted to

(e) 1 Cor. 12.
12. 10 29 C. 14.
33. C. 1. 10.
10 15, C. 11. 16.
Eph. 4. 3. 10 17
Rom. 15. 5 6.
1a. 3. 14. 15. 16.
17, 18. Phil.
2. 1. 2. 3.
1 Cor. 3. 3. 4.

to Christianity, since Christs time, till within our memories? If yea; then let the Independents nominate the place, age, Author, if they can. If not: then doubtlesse that can be no *Church Government of Christs* or his *Apostles* Institution, which had never yet any being, nor approbation in the world, till this present age, for ought that can be proved.

7. Whether the selfe-same Law of Nature, God, and rule of rectified reason, which instructed, warranted: all persons, Nations, as they multiplied, from private families to unite themselves into severall Villages, * Cities, Kingdoms, Republics, and to subject themselves to some one or other publike forme of Civill Government, and such generall Laws, (obliging all persons, societies of men alike) which they conceived most usefull, necessary for their common safety, and prosperity; did not heretofore, and now likewise teach perswade & instruct all men to use the selfe-same form of proceeding in matters of *Church Government*, as the number of Christians, Churches multiplied, or shall yet encrease among them? Since all Nations whatsoever upon their conversion to Christianitie have proceeded in this Method, as all Ecclesiasticall Histories and the Acts of *Councils* testifie? For example, first one person (or more) in a Nation was converted to the Faith of Christ; who converted his Family, and so perchance for a time had a private Church in his owne house; This Family after converted other persons, families by degrees, who united themselves into a Congregationall or Parish Church; after which the Christians multiplying, and their Princes, Magistrates, Nations embracing the Christian Religion, they divided themselves into many Parochiall Churches, Diocesse, Provinces; none of which Parochiall Churches, when multiplied and the whole Nation converted, either were or claimed to be independent but were ever subordinate to (h) *Nationall* or *Provinciall* Synods, Clarks, to the (i) *Common Councell of Presbyters*, and governed by generall Laws or constitutions, to which they still submitted: just like our new Chapells and Churches lately built about *London* and other places which are not Independent, but subordinate to the Ecclesiasticall Lawes and publike settled Government of our *Nationall Church*. A course observed in all Religions, Nations in the world since *Adams* time till now, for ought appears to me.

* Gen 4 17. c.
10. & 21 &
14. *Arish*, pol.
lib 1. c. 1. 2.
&c.

* Rom. 16 15
1 Cor. 16. 19
A. 11. 19. 10
25 & c 13. 14
& 16. and 17.
and 18 c. 18.
30, 31.
(b) See *Binius*,
Surius, *Crab*,
Merlin, *Syr-*
mond, *Catanza*,
and *Sir. Hen.*
Spelmans
T. O. M. E. S. of
Councils.
Episcopus *De-*
metri *Ecclesi-*
Galliane.

Gratian *In Carnotei* fit, The harmony of Confessions; *Judeus* and other Canonists. (i) *Commun* *Pres-*
byterorum concilio *Ecclesiæ* *regeborum* *Hier.* *Epist.* *ad Evangelium* *et* *Com.* *in Tit.* 1. *Ignatius* *Epist.* 5. 6 18.
Tertul. *Apolog.* *advers.* *Genesios* 39. *Irenæus* *advers.* *Hæreses* l. 4. c. 43. 140. (37. *epist.* 6. 18. 28. 39. 45.
Sedulius *et* *Aufan.* *in Tit.* 1. see my *Anapathy* of the English Lordly Prelacy, &c. *part.* 2. c. 8. 9 Where
this is largely proved. *Harmony of Confessions*, *Sec.* 11. 12.

(4) *Exo.* 23. 17. And why this order, dictated by God, nature, and constantly pursued in all Nations converted to Christian Religion, should not be perpetually observed, 35. 1. *Deu.* 1. 6. 15. 17. c. 1. 1. *Lev.* 8. 3. *Num.* 8. 20. c. 13. 26. *10th* 22. 12. 10. *Arrians*, *Donatists*, and other *Hereticks*, who yet were not Independent amongst themselves) nor any direct Scripture, Reason, or Authority can be produced, to falsifie Conscience, for ought ever I could yet discern, nor yet for particular Church Covenants, (to which all Members must subscribe before admission into Independent Churches) I can yet see no ground.

10. 9. c. 18. 1. 2. 8. Whether the concession of one *Catholike Church* throughout the world, c. 19. 1. &c. denied by none: the (h) *Nationall Assembly* and Church of the *Israelites* under

1. *Chron.* 5. 1.

the Law, (who had yet their distinct Synagogues and Parochiall Assemblies) In-
 stituted, approved by God himselfe; the Synodall Assembly of the Apostles, Elders,
 and Brethren at Jerusalem, Acts 15. who (1) made and sent binding Deerees to
 the Churches of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, Cilicia, and other Churches; com-
 pared with the severall generall (in) Injunctions of Paul in his Epistles to Timothy,
 Titus, the Corinthians, and other Churches hee wrote to, touching Church disci-
 pline, Order, Government; seconded with all Oecumenicall, Nationall, Provinci-
 all, Connoells, Synods, and the Church Government exercised throughout the world,
 in all Christian Realmes, States, from their first generall reception of the Gospell
 till this present; compared with Acts 7. 38. c. 2. 47. c. 5. 11. c. 8. 1. 3. c. 12. 5.
 c. 15. 22. c. 20. 28. Math. 16. 18. Ephes. 3. 10. 21. c. 3. 25. 27. 29. 32. Col. 1.
 18. 24. 1 Tim. 3. 5. 15. Be not an infallible prooffe and Justification of Nationall
 Churches; of a common Presbyterian, Classicall government, to which particular
 Congregations, Persons ought to be subordinate, & an apparent subversion of the
 Novell Independent Invention? Whether all answers given to these examples &
 Texts, by Independents be not, when duly scanned, meer palpable shifts or
 evasions which can neither satisfie the Consciences or Judgements of any intel-
 ligent Christians? And whether their argument from these phrases (n) *the Chur-*
ches, *the Churches of Christ*, of *Asia*, *Macedonia*; all *Churches*, &c. in the plurall
 number (meant only of the Churches then planted in severall Cities, Provinces,
 Regions, Nations, under distinct civill Governments, comprised in Scripture un-
 der this aggregate Title *the Church*, oft times, and then equivalent to Nationall
 Churches derived out of them as the Gospell, and beleivers of it multiplied) be
 any more or better prooffe of particular Independent Churches in one & the selfe
 same City, Nation, Kingdome, Republique; Then Historians, Councells, and
 Canons mentioning of the Churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France,
 Spain, or the Churches within the Province of Canterburie, Yorke, or Diocese
 of London, &c. argue, all or any of their Parish Churches to be Independent, not
 one Parochiall Church in all these Realmes being yet independent, but alwayes
 subordinate to the whole Nationall or Provinciaall Churches, Councels, Parlia-
 ments, Synods of these Kingdomes, as all Authors and experience witnes.

9. Whether the Independents challenge of the Presbyterians to shew them
 any Nationall Church, Professing Christ in our Saviours or the Apostles dayes,
 before any one Nation totally converted to the Christian faith, or any generall
 open profession made of it by the Princes, Majestrates and Major part of any Na-
 tion, Kingdome, Republique, who were then all generally Pagans and Persecu-
 tors of the Gospell, not then univerally embraced, be not a most irrationall un-
 just demand? And whether this Argument from thence.

There was no Nationall Church professing Christian Religion in the Apostles
 dayes (before any Nation totally converted to Christianity.)

Ergo, there ought to be no such Nationall Church now; though the (o) *Prophets*
long before assured us; and (p) *Christ with his Apostles certainly knew & predicted*
there should be Nationall conversions, Churches after their dayes.

Be not as absurd an Argument as these ensuing.

There was no Nation wholly converted to the faith, nor any Church-meetings
 of Christians in publique Churches, but only in (q) *privat Families, Cavies, Cor-*
ners in the Apostles dayes.

Ergo.

c. 6. 3. 12. 13.
 c. 7. 8. 9. c. 20.
 45. 14. c. 13.
 2. 3. c. 30. 1.
 10. 27. c. 31. 1.
 Ezra. 3. 1. c. 10.
 1 & c. Neh. 8.
 1. 10. 18. Luk.
 1. 41.
 (1) Acts 15.
 23. 10. 23. c. 16.
 14. c. 21. 25.
 (m) Cor. 7. 17.
 c. 11. 6. c. 4.
 22. c. 16. 1. 2.
 Gal. 1. 1. See
 Rev. 1. 11.
 10. c. 2. 7.
 c. 22. 17.
 n Acts 9. 31. c.
 15. 41. c. 16. 5.
 Rom. 16. 4. 16.
 Cor. 7. 17.
 c. 11. 16. c. 11.
 33. 34. c. 16.
 19. 2 Cor. 8. 1.
 18. 19. 23. 24.
 c. 11. 12.
 2 Thes. 1. 4.
 Rev. 1. 11. 20.
 c. 2. 7. 11. 13.
 19. c. 3. 6. 13.
 22. c. 21. 16.
 o I say 2. 3.
 Mic. 4. 1. to 5.
 Pf. 72. 17.
 Pf. 82. 8. Psal.
 86. 9. Ier. 16.
 19. Mal. 1. 11.
 Isa. 11. 9. 10. 16.
 c. 9. 12. 23. c.
 54. 1. 23. c. 60.
 3. 10. 12. Zach.
 8. 22.
 (p) Lu. 2. 32.
 Mar. 13. 10.
 Act. 12. 46. 47.
 48. Ro. 10. 18.
 20. 1. 12. &c.
 q Rom. 16. 5.
 1 Cor. 16. 19.
 Col. 4. 15.
 Philem. 2. 23.
 Heb. 11. 37.
 38. Acts 20. 7.
 8. Acts 1. 13.
 14. Ioh. 20. 19.

Ergo, no Nations ought to be totally converted to the faith, nor any Christians to meete in publique Churches, but onely in private Families, Caves, Corners now; as they did then.

There was no Nation, Kingdom, City, Republique, Catholique, Congregationall, or Parochiall Church in *Adams* yonger dayes, before people were multiplied, but only a family Government, and Church.

Ergo, there ought to be none but an Oeconomicall or Family Government, and Church, but no Nation, Kingdome, City, Republike, Catholike, or Parish Church now. No man will be so void of sence or reason to argue thus.

Every man in his Infancy is borne destitute of Religion, of the use of speech, reason, understanding, faith, legs, &c.

Ergo, he ought to continue so when he is grown a man.

Yet this is the maine Argument of some Independents.

The Christian Church in the Apostles times, whiles she was in her very Infancy, and under persecution, was not Nationall, but so and so, (yet never Independent.)

Ergo, she must not now be Nationall, but still necessarily continue in, and be reduced to her primitive infant condition, and to an Independent Government.

When as the very History of the *Acts*, and *Pauls Epistles* clearly informe us, that as the number of Christians multiplied, so their (r) Churches, Church Officers multiplied, their Church government, Discipline varied. At first the Christian Church had none but *Apostles* to preach and instruct the people; but when beleevers multiplied, then they and the Apostles ordained (s) *Deacons* after that (t) *Elders*, *Evangelicall Bishops*, *Widdowes*, with other Church Officers. And then fell, not only to write new Gospels, Epistles, Canonick Scriptures, and rules of faith, (as appeares by the whole New Testament) for the Churches further instruction, Edification, direction, by the speciall guidance of (u) Gods spirit; but also to prescribe new necessary (x) Rules, Canons, directions, with sundry matters of Order, Discipline, as new occasions were Offered, which liberty of ordaining, supplying, instituting new Rites, Orders, Canons, things necessary or expedient for the Churches peace and welfare, they transmitted to posterity; and all Churches of Christ in all ages, places, yea the Independents themselves, have claimed and exercised this very liberty, as their right; there being many things in their independent Government, which have no expresse warrant nor example in sacred wit to justifie them.

10. Whether Independents can produce any one solid reason, why they ought not (in point of Conscience) willingly to submit to a *Presbyteriall Government* in case it shall be established among us by the generall consent of the Synod, and Parliament, as most consonant to Gods word, the Lawes and Government, of our Realme? and if not, whether it will not be justly reputed an high degree of *Obstinacy*, *Singularity*, *Arrogancy*, *Selfe-ends*, and peremptory *Schisme* in them to oppose this forme of Government, or demand a speciall exemption from it, for themselves alone? when as Papists, Anabaptists and all other Sects may claime the like exemption, upon the like grounds as they alleadge?

11. Whether that Independent Government which some contend for, is positively

(r) Gal. 1. 1.
Acts 9. 31. c.
15. 4. 16. 5.
Rom. 16 4. 16.
1 Cor 7. 17.
7. 11. 16. c. 14.
33. c. 16. 19.
2 Cor. 1. 18.
19. 23. 24.
11. 18. 2 Thef.
1 Rev. 1. 11.
20 c. 22. 16.

(s) Acts 6. 1. 10.
8. 1 Tim. 3. 8.
(t) Acts 11. 30.
c. 15. 2. 4. Phil.
1. 1. Tit. 1. 5.
1 Tim. 3. c. 10.
6. c. 5. 17. 1 am.
5. 14. 1 Pet. 5.
1. 2. 1 Cor. 11.
28. 39. Eph. 4.
2. 1. 12. 13.
1 Tim. 5. 3. 9.
10.
2 Pet. 7. 10. 21.
(v) 2 Tim. 3.
16. 2.
(x) 1 Cor. 1.
8. 3. & 4. & 5.
8. 6. c. 11. 24.
8. 7. & 8. & 9.
8. 10. 11. 8.
12. & 14. &
16. & c. 17. 2.
Epist. 10. Tim.
Tit. 2. 1. & 2.
1 Cor 7. 13. 2.
31. 4. 3.

freely and fully agreed on, and laid downe without disguises, and then duly pondered in the ballance of scripture or right reason, be not of its owne nature, a very Seminary of Schismes, and dangerous divisions in Church, state? a flouthead to let in an inundation of all manner of Heresies, Errors, Sects, Religions, destructive opinions, Libertinisme and lawlesse among us, without any sufficient means of preventing or suppressing them when introduced? Whether the small result of it (as Master Williams in his late dangerous * *Licentious Rooke determines*) will not really resolve it selfe into this detestable conclusion. *That every man, whither he be Jew, Turk, Pagan, Papist, Arminian, Anabaptist, &c. ought to be left to his own free liberty of conscience, without any coercion or restraint, to embrace & publicly to profess what Religion, Opinion, Church, Government he pleaseth, & conceiveth to be truest, though never so erroneous, false seditious, detestable in it selfe?*

And whither such a Government as this ought to be embraced much lesse established among us (the sad effects whereof we have already experimentally felt, by the late dangerous increase of many *Anabaptistickall, Antinomian, Hereticall, Atheistickall* opinions, as of the souls mortality divorce at pleasure, &c. lately Broached, Preached, Printed in this famous City, which I hope Our grand Councell will speedily and carefully suppress, and by our divisions betweene some of our Commanders refusing to be dependent or subordinat one to another,) I referre to the judgement of all such who have any sparkes of love to God, Religion, their bleeding dying distracted native Country flaming in their breasts, or any remainder of right reason residing in their brains.

12. Whether the very title of *Independency* be not altogether improper for any man or Christian, as such, who is naturally as a man, spiritually as a Christian, (y) *separable* (x) *dependent creature needing both the Communion, and assistance of other persons, Nations, Churches? Whether the National League & Covenant we have taken doth not in sundry respects strongly ingage us against Independency? and whether the root from which it originally springs (if really searched to the very bottom despoiled of all disguised pretences) be not a Pharisaeical (a) dangerous spiritual Pride, unglorious Singularitie, or selfe-conceitednes of mans owne superlative holines (as they deeme it) which makes them, contrary to the Apostles rule (b) to esteeme others better then themselves: to deeme themselves so transcendently holy, sanctified, and Religious above others, that they esteeme them altogether unworthy of yea wholly exclude them from their Communion & Church-society, as (c) *Publicans, Heathens, or prophane persons* (though perchance as good, or better Christians then themselves) unless they will submit to their Church-covenants, & Government, refusing all true brotherly familiarity, society with them, & passing oft times most uncharitable censures on their very hearts and spirituall estates (of which God never made them Judges & (d) *Forbids them for to judge, because he (e) only knowes mens hearts*: Which hath lately ingendred an extraordinary strangenes, uncombleness and coldnes of brotherly affection, if not great disunion, disaffection, and many dissensions among Professors themselves, yea, carelesse and neglect of one anothers welfare. Our mutuall Christian dependency on and Relations one to another as Christian Brethren. As members of the selfe-same fait and visible Church of Christ, (f) *being the strangest bond of unitie, of brotherly love, care, reliefe, and mutuall assistance in all times of neede: it being the common**

* A Bloody Tenent.

(y) Gen. 2. 18.
6. 17. c. 10.
11. r. 4. Arist.
Polit. 1. 1. & 2.
1 Cor. 12. 10
31. Acts 10. 5.
10. 48. c. 11. 21.
15. 16. c. 15. 1.
10. 17. 1 Cor.
16. 13. 2.
2 Cor. 2. 11.
11. 2 Cor. 11.
28.
15. Acts 19. 9.
10. c. 11. 21.
22.
(x) Rom. 10.
14.
15. 65. 5. Lu.
18. 10. 10. 19.
Pro. 30. 12.
Math. 7. 1.
(b) Ph. 1. 23.
(c) Lu. 18. 10.
11. 12. Math.
18. 17.
(d) Math. 7. 1.
Rom. 2. 13. 14.
10.
(e) 2 Chron. 6.
10. 17. 9. 19.
f Acts 2. 44. 45.
46. 1 Cor. 12.
12. 10. 26. c. 16.
12. 12.
Cor. 8. Ephes.
4. 3. 4. 5. 6. c. 5.
25. 10. 23.
1 Tim. 5. 8. 2.
Cor. 11. 21. c.
12. 14.

prattise

of a natural disposition of all men, to g. disaffection, neglect the reliefe, assistance
and protection of those who are independent on them, or have no relations to
them, no communion with them, and whom they esteem as strangers, with whom they
neither have nor thinke fit to have any brotherly Church society; Whence those
of different Churches, or contrary religions (as Christians, Turks, Papists, Pro-
testants, &c.) are alwayes for the most part at variance, enmity, seldom or never
friendly, brotherly, charitable or assistant one to another. Since then this New
Invention of Independency, is apt to produce such uncharitablenes, unfociablenes,
strangeness, differences, coldnesse of brotherly love, care, reliefe, and mutuall
assistance, even among Christians who profess themselves true Saints of God;
and tends apparently to the violation of these Principall (h) precepts of the Gos-
pell, and choicest badges of Christianity, by which we know we are of the truth, that
we are Christs Disciples indeed; translated from life to death, and may assure our
hearts hereof; namely: to love one another: to love all the Saints and Brethren un-
feignedly, not in word & in tongue, but indeed & in truth, with a pure heart fervently;
(i) to walk in love as Christ loved us: so put on as the elect of God (holy and beloved)
bowels of mercy, kindnesse, humbleness of minds, meeknesse, long-suffering: so be
kind and tenderhearted one towards another: and above all things to put on Charity
which is the bond of perfectnesse, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the
band of peace, to which we are called in one body; there being, & we all having, but
one body, one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one Baptisme, one
God and Father of all, who is above all, and thorough all, and over us all; I humbly
referre it to the serious consideration of all pious and peaceable Christians, whether
it can be any Church Government of Christs invention, approbation, or institution
fit to be embraced in any Christian Realme: wherein we should wish (k) one minde
and one mouth glorifie God; and all speake the same thing without any divisions
among us, being perfectly joynd together in the same minde, and in the same
judgement. This is Gods owne precept; and it shall be my dayly prayer, it may
now prove all our reall practise. I shall close up all with this exhortation of the Apo-
stle, necessary for our distracted times; (l) If there be any consolation in Christ, if
any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill yee
my joy, that you be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one
mind, Let nothing be done (henceforth as to much I feare hath formerly bin) through
strife or vain glory; but in lowlines of mind, let each esteeme of others better then him-
selfe; Looke not every man on (or after) his owne things; but every man also on the
things of others; m And I beseech you Brethren marke them which cause divisions &
offences, contrary to the doctrine which yee have learned, and avoid them; Follow
after the things which make for peace, and such things only where with one may ed-
ifie another; laying aside all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and e-
vil speaking, with all malice, covetousnesse, pride, and self seeking: which duly pra-
ctised will speedily reconcile and terminate all our differences, eternally unite us in
a lasting bond of reall Vnity and brotherly love against our Common enemies;
who endeavour to raine us by our uncharitall sad divisions.

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